

## Responding Instead of Reacting

### Traditional Reactions

"it's not that difficult."

"Go to the principal's office."

"You're a teenage now and you need to learn to deal with life."

"Stop crying."

"You're so dramatic."

"Stop acting like a baby."

"You need to learn to be responsible."

"Detention is waiting for you."

"Stop being so needy."

"I can't help you with this issue--  
I've got 30 other children in this class."

"Don't you talk to an adult like that!"

"You should have never have acted like that."

"Stop whining."

"I'm calling your parents. Wait until they find out."

"Act your age."

"You need to take ownership/responsibility for this."

### Trauma Informed Responses

"I need to know how hard this is for you."

"I'm here. You're not in trouble."

"I don't want you alone in this. Let me help you."

"It's okay to feel."

"You need to be heard."

"That really set you back, didn't it?"

"Let's chunk this down so it is more manageable."

"Sit with me."

"What is it you need help with?"

"We'll get through this together. Every single student in this class is important."

"You're allowed to have a voice. Let's talk together."

"Sometimes life just gets too big, doesn't it?"

"I want to understand you better. If I know how you feel, I'll be able to help you better. Use your voice so I can really understand."

"Let's get everyone involved to support you. You're not trouble. I want your parents involved so we can all find a way to make this better."

"This is too big to keep to yourself."

"I'm sorry this is so hard."

"You're old enough to handle this on your own."

"Let's handle this together."

"Grow up."

"I'm here to support you."

"You won't have help in college, so you need to do this on your own now."

"Let me help you now so you'll be ready for college."

"You need to behave because you're in my classroom."

"I am here to make it safe for you."

"You need to be like other kids."

"You have your own kind of genius."

"Nobody is going to like you if you keep misbehaving."

"I know you want to be well liked, so let's make that happen."

Taken from Help for Billy: A Beyond Consequences Approach to Helping Challenging Children in the Classroom, Heather T. Forbes, 2012.